

BOOK REVIEW

DAVID W. HALL, WILLIAM J. WEBER, EDITED BY JASON H. BYRD. 2011. **Wildflowers of Florida and the Southeast.** (ISBN: 978-0-615-39502-9, hbk.). D.W. Hall, Wildflower Book 8135 Meadowlark Court Melrose, FL 32666, U.S.A. (**Orders:** D.W. Hall, Wildflower Book 8135 Meadowlark Court Melrose, FL 32666; Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/Wildflowers-Florida-Southeast-David-Hall/dp/0615395023>). \$40 (plus s&h: \$8 USPS Media Mail, \$18.95 USPS Priority Mail), 819 pp.

Florida and the southeast U.S. possess a rich and abundant flora highlighted by their wildflowers. Florida ranks behind only Texas and California as the U.S. state with the most plant species. With this tome, the authors provide both amateur and professional botanists with an essential guide for identifying the local wildflowers of the region. The authors emphasize Florida, yet many of the featured plants occur through the Gulf and Eastern Coastal Plains, especially North Carolina and west into east Texas.

This book covers more than 750 species with descriptions and color photographs. The area of plant occurrence is listed along with habitat type, the frequency of occurrence, and flowering season for each species. Frequently, more than one common name is listed for each species; the first name listed being the one most commonly recognized. The treatment is organized by flower color and these colors were determined using the authors "best judgment." Some subjectivity was used in grouping the plants, for example purple is listed in the "blue" category and flowers that exhibit more than one color were grouped by the most common color for the species. In some cases, the authors have added photographic inserts displaying color variation. The flower color categories include red, pink, blue, orange, yellow, white, and green.

The book begins with a description of the treatment and an introduction to ecological communities that provides a brief description of each (coastal, salt flats, coastal scrub, etc) with select pictures. Within the treatment, the plant descriptions appear on one page, vis-à-vis the plant photos on the opposite page. The plant photos are of various sizes and some species have more than one photo. These photographs by William Weber are excellent quality and many point out key botanical characteristics useful for identification. The book closes with a glossary of botanical terms and an index of scientific and common names.

I recommend this book to those among us who are eager to learn these regional wildflowers. The breadth of the book makes it far more comprehensive than most wildflower guide books and that fact alone should see it widely utilized by botanists of the southeast. The high quality photographs and botanical and ecological information make this a valuable book for learning the wildflower flora of Florida and the southeast U.S.

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